

## 12.910 MISSING PERSONS

### **References:**

Procedure 12.110, Handling Suspected Mentally Ill Individuals and Potential Suicides  
 Procedure 12.400, Incident and Miscellaneous Reporting  
 Procedure 12.555, Arrest/Citation: Processing of Adult, Misdemeanor and Felony Offenders  
 Procedure 12.600, Prisoners: Securing, Handling, and Transporting  
 Procedure 12.912, Child Abduction/Amber Alert Plan  
 National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Manual – Missing Persons  
 A Child is Missing Program – (ACIM)  
 Ohio Revised Code – Section 5502.52, Statewide Emergency Alert Program Regarding  
     Abducted Children  
 Ohio Revised Code – Section 5502.53, Statewide Blue Alert Program  
 Hamilton County Urban Search and Rescue Task Force-(USAR)  
 Jonathan's Law (House Bill 571)

### **Definitions:**

The Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board define categories of risk for patients in care facilities as follows:

**Category I** is a high risk patient who is a minor or legal hold, who has exhibited specific evidence of dangerousness, such as a suicide plan, made a threat against a specific person, observed indiscriminate assaultive behavior, or a complete inability to care for self.

**Category II** is a moderate risk patient with inconclusive evidence of dangerousness. History may indicate a potential for aggression if provoked. May have a history of Absent Without Leave (AWOL) with no violent episodes.

**Category III** is a patient that has **not** exhibited evidence of dangerousness to self or others, and can care for self. Frequent AWOL abuser, self-return is anticipated.

The **Hamilton County Urban Search and Rescue Task Force (USAR)** is a special response unit trained to conduct searches for missing or lost persons that involve a large area search, a structure collapse or other natural or manmade disaster.

Ohio **Blue Alert** is a notification system intended to enlist public assistance in the event of a tragedy involving a critically injured or killed law enforcement officer where the suspect(s) are still at large, or in the event of a missing law enforcement officer. The criteria, established in Ohio Revised Code 5502.53, Statewide Blue Alert Program, must be met to initiate a Blue Alert.

### **Purpose:**

Establish Department guidelines governing the reporting and investigation of missing persons.

To ensure all missing persons cases are investigated in a professional and timely manner and to resolve the cases as soon as possible by locating the missing person.

**Policy:**

Any responsible and competent adult whose whereabouts are unknown by choice will not be reported as missing.

Investigating officers are required to determine, based on the individual circumstances of each case and the age of the missing person, whether or not foul play and suspicious circumstances exist. Any further action will be determined based upon that investigation.

If any doubt exists, complete a Form 304, Missing Report.

**Information:**

The Emergency Search for Missing or Endangered (ESME) program, developed by the Personal Crimes Squad, is an enhancement to the Department's initial response and investigation of missing person cases. This program assist officers in determining the appropriate resources and actions to best resolve the case from the moment a call is received at the Emergency Communications Center through the ultimate resolution.

The ESME program is based on national best practices and was developed using resources from the University of Cincinnati Police Institute, Association of Police Communications Officers, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy Curriculum and the Ohio Revised Code.

**Procedure:****A. Classifying Missing Persons**

1. The onscene supervisor and investigating officer will evaluate the circumstances and use the 311EQ, Missing Persons High Risk Assessment Questionnaire, to classify the missing person as one of the following:
  - a. Juveniles Classifications
    - 1) Missing Juvenile
      - a) A person less than 18 years of age
      - b) Reported missing by an adult
    - 2) Missing Runaway
      - a) A person less than 18 years of age
      - b) Reported missing by an adult
      - c) Through credible information, it has been determined the juvenile has left the care, custody and control of the reporting adult.
    - 3) Missing Juvenile AMBER Alert
      - a) There is a reasonable belief by law enforcement that abduction has occurred.

- b) Law enforcement believes that the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death.
  - c) There is enough descriptive information about the victim and the abduction for law enforcement to issue an AMBER Alert to assist in the recovery of the child.
  - d) The abduction is of a child 17 years or younger.
  - e) The child's name and other critical data elements, including the Child Abduction flag, have been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.
- b. Adult Classifications
  - 1) Endangered Missing Adult
    - a) A person 18 years of age or older
    - b) A possible victim of foul play
    - c) In poor mental condition
      - 1] Likely to do harm to self or others
      - 2] Disoriented or unable to respond to simple questions regarding personal information, i.e., name, date, or place.
    - d) In poor physical condition
      - 1] Physical impairment(s) which severely limits self-care
      - 2] Dependent on life sustaining medication
    - e) A Category I missing
  - 2) Missing Adult
    - a) A person 18 years of age or older
    - b) Reported missing
  - 3) Senior Alert
    - a) A person 65 years of age or older or who has a mental impairment.
    - b) Law enforcement has confirmed the individual is missing
    - c) The disappearance of the individual poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the individual.
    - d) There is sufficient descriptive information about the individual and the circumstances surrounding their disappearance to indicate that the activation of the alert will help locate the individual.

## B. Who May Report a Missing Person

1. Any responsible adult with accurate information may report someone missing. This includes nursing home or hospital representatives who are in charge of caring for the missing person.
  - a. Missing residents of Summit Behavioral Healthcare (SBH) are investigated by the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP). However, when requested, Department personnel will assist OSHP.

## C. Reporting a Missing Person

1. A person must be reported missing from their residential address, not the address where the missing was last seen.
  - a. The missing's district of residence, not the district where the missing was last seen, is responsible for completing the Form 304 and the follow-up investigation.
    - 1) If a complainant responds to another district, that district will complete the report and:
      - a) Notify a supervisor in the missing's district of residence.
      - b) Immediately send a blotter notification to the missing's district of residence. Include the Records Management System (RMS) case number, missing's name, last known location, and date and time missing was last seen.
2. Reporting a Missing Juvenile
  - a. A Form 304 will be filed immediately.
  - b. Federal law requires entry of missing juveniles into the Law Enforcement Automated Data System/National Crime Information Center (LEADS/NCIC) computer files within two hours from the time the original call is received.
  - c. The investigating officer completing the Form 304 will have it checked by a supervisor and immediately send a blotter notification to Personal Crimes Squad (PCS). Include the RMS case number, missing juvenile's name, last known location, and date and time the missing juvenile was last seen.
3. Reporting a Missing Adult
  - a. Adults 18, 19, or 20 years of age will be reported immediately. Federal Law requires entry of missing adults 18 years of age but less than 21, into the Law-Enforcement Automated Data System/National Crime Information Center (LEADS/NCIC) within two hours from the time the original call is received.
  - b. Adults 21 years of age and older:

- 1) If foul play is suspected, the information will be entered into NCIC within 7 days.
  - 2) If no foul play is suspected and the missing person has not returned, the information will be entered into NCIC within 30 days.
  - 3) If no foul play was indicated initially, but evidence of such becomes known before the end of the 7 day period, the information will be entered into NCIC before the end of the 7 day period.
  - 4) If no foul play was indicated initially, but evidence of such becomes known after the seven day period, the information will be entered into NCIC within 48 hours.
4. Reporting a Missing Nonresident of Cincinnati, whose location is unknown
- a. If the missing visitor does not meet the criteria of a Missing Juvenile, AMBER Alert, Missing Endangered, or Senior Alert, refer the reporting person to the police agency of the missing person's residence.
    - 1) This does not preclude the officer from initiating an "Attempt to Locate" broadcast if necessary.
  - b. If the missing person fits the criteria for an Endangered Missing Adult, Amber Alert, or Senior Alert, follow Section F and notify the police agency where the missing person resides.
  - c. If the agency where the missing person resides refuses to make the report, the district where the missing person was last seen will make the report and conduct the investigation.
- D. Investigations of Missing Persons and Case Assignment
1. An officer will be dispatched to conduct the initial investigation and follow up on **all** missing person cases.
    - a. Missing persons who meet the criteria for immediate entry into LEADS/NCIC will be entered by PCS. During the hours of 0200 to 0700, or when PCS personnel are not working, missing persons meeting the immediate entry requirement will be entered by the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) CIN1 Operator. Updates and changes to LEADS/NCIC entries will be under the direction of PCS.
  2. The investigating officer will:
    - a. Prior to completing a Form 304, conduct a preliminary investigation in an attempt to locate the missing person. Use Form 311EQ and Form 311EL, ESME Officer Check-Off List.
    - b. Report missing persons to ECC as soon as an adequate description is available for a radio broadcast.
    - c. Complete a Form 304 for all missing persons.

- d. Telephone and send a blotter notification to PCS, or the Criminal Investigations Section (CIS) desk if PCS is unavailable. The blotter notification must include the RMS case number, missing's name, last known location, and date and time the missing was last seen.
  - e. Submit the missing information to Teletype, who will send a teletype message and provide a teletype number.
  - f. Obtain a picture of the missing person, if available.
    - 1) If a picture is available, indicate it on the Form 304. If possible, retain pictures of all persons reported missing for the case jacket. District Quality Assurance (DQA) will scan and attach the picture in the RMS case folder.
  - g. Determine if there are fingerprints available of the missing person.
    - 1) If fingerprints are available, indicate it on the Form 304. Include the location where the fingerprints are on file.
  - h. Notify a supervisor if additional resources are needed for a search, canvass, media, etc.
  - i. Follow up on information obtained during the initial investigation.
  - j. Attempt to locate the missing person and/or develop additional leads.
  - k. Start a case jacket which will include:
    - 1) Copies of the Form 304
    - 2) Original Form 311 EQ
    - 3) Original Form 311EL
    - 4) Photo of missing person
    - 5) Case notes and additional officer's notes if applicable
    - 6) Canvas log if applicable
    - 7) Missing Persons Task List if applicable
  - l. Continue the investigation until the conclusion of his/her shift.
- 3. The investigating officer will notify their on-duty supervisor if the investigating officer's shift ends without the missing person being located.
  - 4. The on-duty supervisor will forward the ESME case jacket the next shift supervisor who will:
    - a. Reassign the case to another officer. If the next shift has a district investigator, the missing person case will be reassigned to the investigative unit.
    - b. Brief the next investigating officer or district investigator on the progress of the investigation.

5. Once the case reaches the district investigative unit, a district investigator will follow up on the missing person case, completing the case file with updated information and case progress.
  6. If after 7 days the missing person is not located, the district investigator assigned the missing person case will submit the missing person case file to the investigative supervisor. The investigative supervisor will confirm the person is still missing and, upon review and approval of the case file, will forward the case file to PCS.
    - a. PCS is responsible for follow-up investigation after the 7 day district investigation.
  7. PCS supervisors will review the missing person case jacket for accuracy and completeness.
- E. Reporting a Missing Law Enforcement Officer – Blue Alert
1. **Both** of the following criteria must be met to initiate a Blue Alert:
    - a. A local law enforcement agency confirms that a law enforcement officer has been seriously injured or killed, and a suspect has not been apprehended, or that a law enforcement officer is missing while on duty under circumstances warranting concern for the law enforcement officer's safety.
    - b. There is sufficient descriptive information about the suspect or the circumstances surrounding a law enforcement officer's injury, death or disappearance to indicate that activation of the alert may help locate a suspect or a missing law enforcement officer.
  2. Upon determining the O.R.C. criteria have been met, the responding district supervisor shall contact a CIS supervisor and request activation of a Blue Alert.
    - a. The CIS supervisor will:
      - 1) Confirm the O.R.C. criteria have been met.
      - 2) Issue a Blue Alert.
      - 3) Ensure the Blue Alert is immediately entered into LEADS/RCIC by PCS personnel or the CIS desk officer between 0000-0800 hours.
        - a) The original LEADS /RCIC Blue Alert entry and LEADS/RCIC COP response message will be attached to the Form 304 and retained by the CIS investigator assigned to the case.
        - b) If CIS personnel are unable to make the entry into LEADS/RCIC, the CIS supervisor will contact the RCIC help desk at 513-352-6448, Monday through Friday, 0700-1900 hours and they will assist with the entry. If outside of RCIC help desk hours contact LEADS Control at 614-466-3055.

- b. Upon activation of a Blue Alert, all law enforcement agencies will receive a COP Notification via LEADS/RCIC. When the Department confirms the Blue Alert Criteria, the Critical Information Communication Center in Columbus, Ohio will automatically update the following:
      - 1) Toll free tip line
      - 2) MCT statewide message to all troopers
      - 3) ALPR entry along the Ohio Turnpike
      - 4) ODOT electronic highway signs in the affected area
      - 5) Law enforcement radio broadcast
      - 6) OHLEG interface for distribution
      - 7) Facebook and Twitter feeds
      - 8) Integrated text and media blast
      - 9) Truckers Alert activation
    - c. The Public Information Office (PIO) and each District Investigative Unit will issue a media blast email and a Citizen Observer Alert.
  - 3. Once the need for the Blue Alert has passed, the message must be cancelled.
    - a. The CIS supervisor will ensure the required LEADS/RCIC cancellation entry is completed.
    - b. The original LEADS/RCIC cancellation message will remain with the CIS investigator assigned to the case and attached to the Form 304.
- F. Utilizing the Hamilton County Urban Search and Rescue Task Force (USAR)
  - 1. If the missing person fits the criteria for a Missing Juvenile, AMBER Alert, Endangered Missing Adult, Senior Alert, or Blue Alert Missing Law Enforcement Officer, ECC will dispatch a district supervisor to the scene who will:
    - a. Direct an area search, if necessary.
      - 1) USAR may be activated for a search when:
        - a) The missing person is non-violent and
        - b) The search is beyond the capabilities of a CPD canine unit and
        - c) The area to be searched is large, such as a park or wooded area.
      - 2) USAR will be activated by notifying ECC.
        - a) Supervisors must provide ECC details of the incident and a contact number for an on-scene supervisor. A USAR representative will contact the on scene supervisor to determine the best course of action.



- b) The on-scene CPD supervisor will maintain authority over the scene. USAR units will remain under tactical supervision of the USAR officer in charge. If circumstances arise that conflict with CPD policy and cannot be resolved, the on-scene CPD supervisor will not deploy USAR units.
- b. Notify PCS during the hours of 0800 to 0200. From the hours 0200 to 0800, notify the CIS desk.
- c. Ensure a Form 304 and blotter notification to PCS was completed.
  - 1) A PCS supervisor, or in his absence a CIS shift supervisor, will decide if PCS personnel will be recalled to respond to the scene **in exceptional cases** requiring their expertise.
  - 2) PCS personnel will duplicate any photographs of the missing person for radio and television station notification.
    - a) From 0800-1600 hours notify PIO to contact the media. From 1600-0800 hours PCS will contact the media and advise PIO that the information has been forwarded.
  - 3) PCS personnel involved in the investigation will maintain a Form 188, Personal Crimes Squad Investigative Report, detailing all Department actions taken to locate the missing person.

#### G. A Child Is Missing Alert Initiation

- 1. If the missing person is a Missing Juvenile, AMBER Alert, Endangered Missing Adult, or Senior Alert, or is a found child/elderly/disabled that is unable to articulate their address, the responding officer can initiate A Child is Missing (ACIM) Alert. A supervisor's permission is not necessary.
  - a. Call ACIM 24 hours a day/7 days a week, toll-free, at 1-888-875-2246.
  - b. Officers will answer all questions and provide the operator with the following information:
    - 1) Reporting agency name
    - 2) Officer name and contact number
    - 3) Case number (if available) or Incident number
    - 4) Name and description of missing
    - 5) Time, date, location, zip code, and county last seen
    - 6) ECC line number for sightings is 513-765-1212

#### H. Closing Missing Person Reports

- 1. Upon locating or confirming, via credible information, the location of a reported missing person, the officer will:
  - a. Cancel the teletype.

- b. Locate the original report in RMS and add a supplement report to the case folder, if the found person is a local missing.
        - 1) For a found “out of town” missing person, complete a Form 316, Minor Accident or Aided Case Report. Include all pertinent information.
  - 2. If the located missing person is a juvenile, conduct a follow up investigation.
    - a. Attempt to determine where and with who the juvenile has been.
    - b. Speak with the juvenile and look for physical signs of abuse or neglect.
      - 1) If there are allegations or physical signs of abuse or neglect, conduct/complete the appropriate investigations.
  - 3. DQA will forward all closed missing case jackets PCS.
    - a. PCS will maintain a perpetual file on all missing persons.
  - 4. PCS will enter appropriate missings in the LEADS/NCIC Missing Persons file.
    - a. All missing adults, ages 21-65, missing over 30 days will be entered into RCIC, LEADS, and NCIC by PCS.
    - b. Check missing persons through any County Law Enforcement Applied Regionally (CLEAR) terminal using a QHW query.
    - c. Access juvenile runaway warrants from Hamilton County with a QHW query.
  - 3. When a missing person's name is not known, check the Missing Persons file through any CLEAR terminal using the QM function.
- I. Identification of Bodies
- 1. PCS can assist in the identification of unidentified human bodies by using its files.
  - 2. PCS will send the Hamilton County Coroner copies of open missing person reports over 30 days old.
- J. Found Persons
- 1. Department personnel who are unable to locate the residence, relatives, and/or other responsible friends of a found person will:
    - a. Contact PCS for assistance in interviewing the found person.
      - 1) PCS will check its records for a possible address on the subject.
      - 2) If PCS is unavailable, contact a CIS supervisor for assistance.
    - b. Officers may utilize the ACIM program.
    - c. Contact 241-KIDS for assistance in emergency care and/or placement of a juvenile.

- d. In applicable cases, complete a Form 527, Arrest and Investigation Report, according to procedures 12.555, Arrest/Citation: Processing of Adult Misdemeanor and Felony Offenders and 12.600, Prisoners: Securing, Handling, and Transporting.
  - e. Any mentally ill person with a mental hold or who voluntarily agrees should be returned to the particular facility that reported the missing. If the facility is unknown, the subject is violent, or from outside the Hamilton County boundaries, the mentally ill person will be taken to University Hospital as directed in Procedure 12.110, Handling Suspected Mentally Ill Individuals and Potential Suicides.
- 2. If the found person is a juvenile, speak with the child and look for physical signs of abuse or neglect.
  - a) If there are allegations or physical signs of abuse or neglect, conduct/complete the appropriate investigations.
- K. Out of Town Missings/Attempts to Locate, Possibly in Cincinnati, Being Investigated by Other Jurisdictions
  - 1. CIN1 will teletype this information in an All County Broadcast (ACB).
  - 2. PCS is responsible for any requested follow-up investigation.
- L. Summit Behavioral Healthcare (SBH) Walkaways
  - 1. Forensic patients
    - a. These patients have been charged with a crime and have been committed through adjudication or are awaiting adjudication. They fall into four categories:
      - 1) NGRI - Not guilty by reason of insanity
      - 2) RTC - Restore to competency (for trial)
      - 3) IST - Incompetent to stand trial (probated by Civil Court)
      - 4) Police Holds - Emergency psychiatric admissions transferred to the SBH prior to trial.
    - b. When a forensic patient escapes, walks away, or is AWOL from the SBH, the OSHP Hamilton Post will initiate a LEADS teletype and forward the information by fax to ECC for an ACB.
      - 1) OSHP will sign felony escape charges on the forensic patient and this information will be included with the ACB.
      - 2) District Four will receive a copy of the AWOL Data Sheet and will assign an investigator to assist the OSHP investigator.
        - a) District Four and ECC will maintain an AWOL Data Sheet File.

- 3) Felony warrants signed on forensic patients will be handled by District Four Investigative Unit.
- c. Forensic patients escaping will receive classification by the HCMHB as a Category I, II, or III.
  - 1) Officers must be aware that a forensic patient has been charged with a crime, and therefore the risk assessment by the HCMHB is completely independent of the patient's status as a forensic patient.
- d. If apprehended, verify wanted status. Escape warrants will be on file at the Clerk's Office or entered in the computer.
  - 1) If the escape warrant is on file, transport the escapee to the Hamilton County Justice Center (HCJC).
  - 2) If the escape charge has not yet been filed, call the OSHP Hamilton Post at 863-4606. They will forward a teletype holder to the HCJC or advise to return the patient to the SBH.
- e. If taken to the HCJC, request "no bond" on the arrest report. If returned to the SBH at the OSHP's request, make a Form 316, Minor Accident/Aided Case/Mental Health Response Report.
  - 1) Fax a copy of all reports to the District Four Investigative Unit Commander. District Four will forward a copy to the OSHP.
- f. Wanted escapees found inside the City will be the Department's responsibility to transport.
  - 1) On occasion, OSHP may request the Department's assistance in picking up a prisoner in Hamilton County. This request will be coordinated through a District Four supervisor.
- g. Call Teletype and request a cancellation of the ACB wanted broadcast.
  - 1) Teletype will contact OSHP to request cancellation of the LEADS teletype entry.
2. Civil Patients
  - a. Patients at the SBH, through Probate Court, will not be charged with felony escape. They can be Category I, II, or III missings.
    - 1) OSHP will notify ECC as outlined above to initiate an ACB.
  - b. If found unattended within the City, return them to the SBH.
    - 1) Violent patients will be transported to the University Hospital as directed in Procedure 12.110, Handling Suspected Mentally Ill Individuals and Potential Suicides.

- c. Do not transport nonviolent SBH civil patients from group homes, other out placement sites, or family members' homes. Patients who are simply late returning on a pass, in a hospital, or in custody of another police agency are the responsibility of the SBH Campus Police. SBH Campus Police can be reached at 948-3600 for transport.
- d. Make a Form 316 on any civil patient transported to SBH and fax a copy to the District Four Investigative Unit.
- e. Call Teletype and request a cancellation of the ACB wanted broadcast.
  - 1) Teletype will contact the OSHP to request cancellation of the LEADS teletype entry.